

T H E  
M A G D A L E N :  
O R

*Dying Penitent.*

E X E M P L I F I E D  
I N T H E D E A T H O F

*F. S.*

Who died April, 1763, aged Twenty-six Years.

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*This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that CHRIST JESUS came into the world to save sinners.*

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D U B L I N :

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# Advertisement.

*The following Narrative was published some Years ago in England, but as it is little known in this Kingdom, the Editor presumes it will be highly acceptable to all those who Rejoice at the Increase of the Redeemer's Kingdom, and the Trophies of his all-conquering Grace.*

A N  
A C C O U N T  
O F T H E D E A T H O F  
*F. S.*

I N A L E T T E R t o a F R I E N D .

DEAR SIR,

**A**S you wanted to see an account of the person I mentioned to you when we last met, set down in writing, I comply most readily with your desire, and send it you as follows.

**T**HIS young woman was the daughter of a gentleman in the army, had a genteel and liberal education, but was reduced by various distresses to great poverty and want. One who had known her in her more prosperous days, took advantage of her indigent circumstances, and by many fair promises, and acts of pretended kindness, drew her into a criminal intimacy with him; she was with child by him, and for some time after she was delivered he contributed something towards the maintenance of the child; but growing tired of her, he left both child and mother without doing any thing farther for them.

*F. S.* had a mother with whom she lived, but who could by no means support the expence now thrown upon her. Various were the ways by which *F. S.* was endeavouring to maintain herself; having a genteel person, a good voice, and a lively genius, she went upon the stage at the little theatre in the *Hay-Market*; after this she strolled with players about the country, but meeting with many disagreeable things in this way of life, she quitted it, and went to work at her needle; this expedient too failed her: after which she went upon the town and turned prostitute; while she was in the midst of all her wickedness she had strong remonstrances from her conscience, insomuch as to occasion many tears to flow from her eyes; conviction of sin pursued her wherever she went: she would walk out into *St. James's-Park*, set herself down upon a bench, and there weep for a considerable time together; and when she has had men come to her lodgings, she has made herself drunk to get rid of the terrors and anguish of her mind; but this would not do, this sin added to the rest still distressed her more, till she was absolutely driven from her lodgings, resolving to take shelter in the *Magdalen House*: she continued there about three months, when something happened which occasioned her leaving it. Going from thence she looked back upon her past life with the utmost abhorrence,



horrence, and was resolved rather to perish with want than to return to it again. She therefore sold the few things she had, leaving herself but bare necessities, and determined to go into some part of the world where she was not known. She went into *Kent*, and it being hay-time she hired herself to a farmer near *Canterbury*, who employed her amongst his haymakers for tenpence a day. Here she often reflected with pain and bitterness of spirit on her past life, yet thanking and praising God who had convinced her of the error of her way, and by his providence and grace had delivered her from it. She comforted herself that though she fared but meanly and laboured hard, yet she was eating the bread of honest industry. When the hay-harvest was over, she was dismissed the farmer's service, and proceeding to *Canterbury* she got a place in a tradesman's house. Here she lived till by excessive hard work, being of delicate and tender frame, she caught a violent cold, which proved the beginning of her last illness, for it ended in a consumption, which in about four months brought her to the grave.

When dismissed from her service she soon consumed the little she had saved in the necessities of life, and was then reduced to beggary. One day being at the cathedral prayers (which she constantly attended) she was observed to weep very bitterly by one

of the clergymen that attended there; after service was over he called her to him, and said, " Young woman, what or who are you?—You seem very sorrowful." Said she, " Sir, I am a poor girl heavy laden with my sins, and I desire to lay them at the REDEEMER'S feet."—" You seem very poor," said he, " Indeed, sir," said she, " God knoweth I am poor in body and in soul." He gave her money, and bid her come to his house every day for victuals, this she did for some time, till finding her disorder increase upon her, she resolved to return to *London* that she might see her mother once more before she died. Accordingly she set out, and under every circumstance of poverty, pain and sickness, reached *London*, where, by the assistance of a former acquaintance of hers, she procured a wretched lodging at sixpence a week; here she lay about a week destitute of every help proper for her case; and thinking herself near her dissolution she sent for her mother, who came to her and found her in the condition above described: the utmost pity and compassion seized upon the mother's heart, which instantly made her forget some differences which had arisen between them; a chair being brought she was carried home to her mother's house, and laid upon a bed from which she never rose more.

The

The interval between her coming to her mother's house and her death, was about a month, during which time at her and her mother's request I visited her. I had known her in the former part of her life before all her distresses, and not having seen her for many years was, as you may easily imagine, under much concern to find her in so different a situation from what I had remembered her in former times; but my concern was soon abated and my utmost wonder excited, by the testimony she bore to the power and love of God our Saviour. She acquainted me with the several circumstances of her past life before recited; adding withal, " O sir, " I abhor myself—I abhor my polluted body " and my more polluted soul—I am the fil- " thiest wretch upon this earth—but there " is mercy—that holy and immaculate " JESUS knows my sorrows and sees my " deep misery." Said I, " Do you believe " him able to save you?" " Yes," she said, " I believe one drop of his blood can quench " a thousand flaming worlds." " You be- " lieve he is able, but do you believe he is " willing?" " Willing," said she, " he had " no errand upon earth but to shew his " willingness to seek and save that which " was lost; my faith in him is like a strong " cable fixed to an immoveable rock. If " the Lord pleases to make me an example, " and therefore continues me here in the vio-  
lent

“ lent pains I now feel, ever so long, I am  
 “ willing, I am ready to suffer it all; but  
 “ should he please to release me, death hath  
 “ lost its sting, and now death shall be my  
 “ life.”

I came again to see her the next day. I asked her how she did; she said, “ My body  
 “ is weaker but my faith is stronger—I am  
 “ in pain all over, my head, ears and bow-  
 “ els are racked, but had I strength I could  
 “ dance—my heart dances within me.” Turning to her mother she said, “ Madam,  
 “ look on me, I am dying, but see how I  
 “ am comforted; let me have no tears I  
 “ beg: look on me be sure when I die,  
 “ when you see the last breath go from me,  
 “ clap your hands and say, God bless her,  
 “ she is gone to glory.” Putting her hands  
 and arms out of bed, which were now reduced to skin and bone, she looked on them with great earnestness, and at the same time transport in her countenance, and said, “ This  
 “ is a delightful sight, no beauty can com-  
 “ pare with this anatomy: these old clothes  
 “ of mine are worn out, but I shall soon  
 “ be clothed afresh.” One standing by repeated *Job* xix. 26. “ Yes,” said she,  
 “ worms shall destroy this body, but no  
 “ worm can touch my soul.” One of her old companions standing by, who hearing she was ill came to visit her, she thus admonished her; “ Look on me, I am a young  
 “ woman,



“ woman, and am dying ; so are you, tho’  
 “ you think not of it : let me intreat you to  
 “ avoid the pernicious ways we have walked  
 “ in, and may the goodness of God to me  
 “ prevail on you to turn to Him, and turn  
 “ no more to folly.” “ Oh,” said she,  
 “ that all my sins were written, that all the  
 “ world might see the blackness of my  
 “ crimes, and detest them—Oh that the  
 “ mercies of CHRIST to my soul were  
 “ written also, and that might turn their  
 “ hearts—How tenderly has he dealt with  
 “ me a poor sinful worm !”—One observed  
 she had deep obligations to him ; “ Oh yes,”  
 said she, “ I am obliged to him for sparing  
 “ me in my sins, I am obliged to him for  
 “ my distresses, for my pains, for this sick-  
 “ bed, this delightful sick-bed, no coach  
 “ and six so delightful, I would not change  
 “ it for all the world ; but how above all  
 “ am I obliged to the Blessed LORD for  
 “ calling me by his grace, and delivering  
 “ my soul ! Oh my poor weak body, was  
 “ my body as strong as my faith I should  
 “ be another *Samson*.” Her great thank-  
 fulness to all that came to visit her, was also  
 an indication of her unfeigned humility, she  
 not only thanking them for their kindness,  
 but noticing at the same time how unworthy  
 she was of any favour at all.

Being a good deal spent with speaking,  
 her voice failed her, so that she could not be  
 heard

heard at any distance from the bed; but I sat close by it and could hear her in broken accents say, "O what comfort—what pleasure in dying—O holy and immaculate Lamb of God, how is it that thou canst look upon such a sinful wretch as I am?"

Another time she said, "Mother, do not be a coward, do not weep for my happiness." "How can I give you up?" said her mother, "my burden is great." "Do like me," said the dying Penitent, "cast your burden upon CHRIST and he will bear it for you."

She said something of unkindness she had met with in the world, but added, "God bless them, I freely forgive them all: I was hungry and they gave me no meat, thirsty and they gave me no drink; but the blessed JESUS will not let the poorest meanest lamb in his flock want any thing that can do them good." She then broke forth into singing,

*The Lord my pasture shall prepare,  
And feed me with a shepherd's care;  
His presence shall my wants supply,  
And guard me with a watchful eye:  
My noon-day walks he shall attend,  
And all my midnight hours defend,  
And then,  
Tho' in the paths of death I tread,  
With gloomy horrors overspread,*

*My*

*My stedfast heart shall fear no ill,  
For thou, O Lord, art with me still:  
Thy friendly crook shall give me aid,  
And guide me thro' the dreadful shade.*

“And so it shall,” added she, with an earnestness and transport not to be described — “Oh that all may avoid my sins, and follow my strong faith when they come to die.”

“Why,” said I, “you turn preacher, you are preaching JESUS CHRIST to us all.” “Preaching,” said she, “Oh that I could preach to all the world, and tell them how gracious the Lord is—preach JESUS CHRIST, what else can I preach—what else can any one preach who knows him? —JESUS, JESUS, Oh that Name! that sweet Name is life to my soul: I trust that Name will dwell upon my unworthy tongue as long as it can move within my lips.” She then again broke forth into singing, and sang,

*Praise GOD from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him all creatures here below;  
Praise him above, ye heavenly host,  
Praise FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.*

Thus did this young creature lie on her sick-bed, praising and blessing God, and filling all that came to see her with wonder at the triumphs of her faith over the enemies of her soul.

Another

Another time I came to see her and she had had a great conflict with the enemy, who seemed to have thrust sore at her that she might fall, but she was more than conqueror. She said to me, "Oh, sir, it seemed to me as though a legion of devils have been ready to seize me, but glory be to God they cannot touch me; no, no, that cross held up in that right hand has put them all to flight, my sins have been represented to me as black as a sackcloth of hair, but the blood of CHRIST hath washed me whiter than snow."

From this time her bodily strength being almost exhausted, she lay without being able to speak as she had done, but her countenance spake with most forcible eloquence the transports of her soul; and when the happy moment of her dismissal came, her mother was near her, and observing her lips move, and putting her ear near to her mouth, heard her whisper, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth, into thy hands I commend my spirit!" She then fetched a short sigh or two, and died without the least sign of pain.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

M. M.



